the unerring test of the census. According to the last enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States, it appeared that the rate of its annual increase, was only about two and a half per cent., whilst that of the other classes was about three. No other adequate cause for this disproportion can be assigned, but that of the improvidence and vices of the class referred to. If previous enumerations exhibited different results, they were owing chiefly to the accession of numbers, which it received by the acquisition of Louisiana, and the events of St. Domingo. But, if the reasoning which I have before employed, be correct, this class is destined, by voluntary manumission or abandonment, to increase and ultimately, perhaps, to be more numerous in the United States, than their brethren in bondage, if there be no provision for their removal to another country.

"Is there no remedy, I again ask, for the evils of which I have sketched a faint and imperfect picture? Is our posterity doomed to endure for ever not only all the ills flowing from the state of slavery, but all which arise from incongruous elements of population, separated from each other by invincible prejudices, and by natural causes? Whatever may be the character of the remedy proposed, we may confidently pronounce it inadequate, unless it provides efficaciously for the total and absolute separation, by an extensive space of water or of land, at least, of the white portion of our population from that which is free of the coloured.

"This brings me to the consideration of the particular scheme of the American Colonization Society, to which this is auxiliary. That scheme does not owe the first conception of its design to any individuals, by whose agency the society was first constituted. Several of them, and especially the late Rev. Mr. Finley, of New Jersey, and Mr. Caldwell, of the District of Columbia, were entitled to great praise for their spirited exertions in the formation and organization of the society. But the original conception of such a project is to be traced to a date long anterior to their laudable efforts on this subject. However difficult it might have been supposed to be in the execution, it was an obvious remedy, and the suggestion of it may be referred back to a period as remote as the Revolutionary War. The State of Virginia, always pre-eminent in works of benevolence, prior to the formation of the American Colonization Society, by two distinct acts of her Legislature, separated by intervals of

time of sufficient length to imply full deliberation, expressed her approbation of the plan of colonization.

"In considering the project of the American Colonization Society, our first inquiry should be into what it really is—then what it has done; and, finally, what it is capable of achieving. It is a voluntary association, formed for benevolent purposes, as must be freely acknowledged by all, if they should even prove the experiment to be impracticable. Its aim is to transport to the western shores of Africa, from the United States, all such free persons of colour as choose voluntarily to go. From its origin, and throughout the whole period of its existence, it has constantly disclaimed all intention whatever of interfering, in the smallest degree, with the rights of property, or the object of emancipation, gradual or immediate. It is not only without inclination, but it is without power, to make any such interference. It is not even a chartered or incorporated company; and it has no other foundation than that of Bible societies, or any other Christian or charitable unincorporated companies in our country. It knows that the subject of emancipation belongs exclusively to the several States in which slavery is tolerated, and to individual proprietors of slaves in those States, under and according to their laws. It hopes, indeed, (and I trust there is nothing improper or offensive in the hope) that if it shall demonstrate the practicability of the successful removal to Africa, of free persons of colour, with their own consent, the cause of emancipation, either by States or by individuals, may be incidentally advanced. That hope is founded not only on the true interest of both races of our population, but upon the assertion, so repeatedly made, that the great obstacle to emancipation arose out of the difficulty of a proper disposal of manumitted slaves. Its pecuniary means, applicable to the design of the institution, are voluntarily contributed by benevolent States or individuals. The States of Virginia and Maryland, besides numerous pious or generous persons throughout the United States, have aided the society.

"Such was the object of the American Colonization Society, organized at the city of Washington about thirteen years ago. Auxiliary institutions have been formed, in various parts of the Union, to aid and cooperate with the parent association, which have limited their exertions chiefly to the transmission to the treasurer of the society, of such funds as they could collect by

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XIV. Books

3.

A History of Colonization on the West Coast of Africa
by Archibald Alexander, Philadelphia, 1846